



WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE

Sharon K. West, RN

Women Veterans Program Manager

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HISTORY OF WOMEN IN THE U.S. MILITARY



Source: America's Women Veterans: Military Service History and VA Benefits Utilization Statistics, Department of Veterans Affairs, National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics, Nov. 23, 2011; http://www.va.gov/VETDATA/docs/SpecialReports/Final_Womens_Report_3_2_12_v_7.pdf

WOMEN VA USERS DOUBLED SINCE 2000



Sources: Women's Health Evaluation Initiative (WHEI) and the Women Veterans Health Strategic Health Care Group. *Sourcebook: Women Veterans in the Veterans Health Administration VI: Sociodemographic Characteristics and Use of VHA Care*, 2011. VHA Office of Finance Allocation Resource Center (ARC).

FEMALE VETERAN STATS

- 8% of the overall Veteran population
 - 1.8 million female Veterans
 - Less than 1% American Indian

By the year **2020** , 10.7% of Veterans will be female



GROWTH EXPECTED TO DOUBLE AGAIN SOON

12% of Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation New Dawn(OEF/OIF/OND) Veterans
18% of National Guard/Reserves
6% of VA health care users

Women Veteran enrollment outpacing that of **men**—**21% increase since 2009**

5 years' free VA health care for OEF/OIF/OND Veterans
with service-related issues



57% of OEF/OIF/OND women Veterans have used VA care

YOUNGER WOMEN'S NEEDS



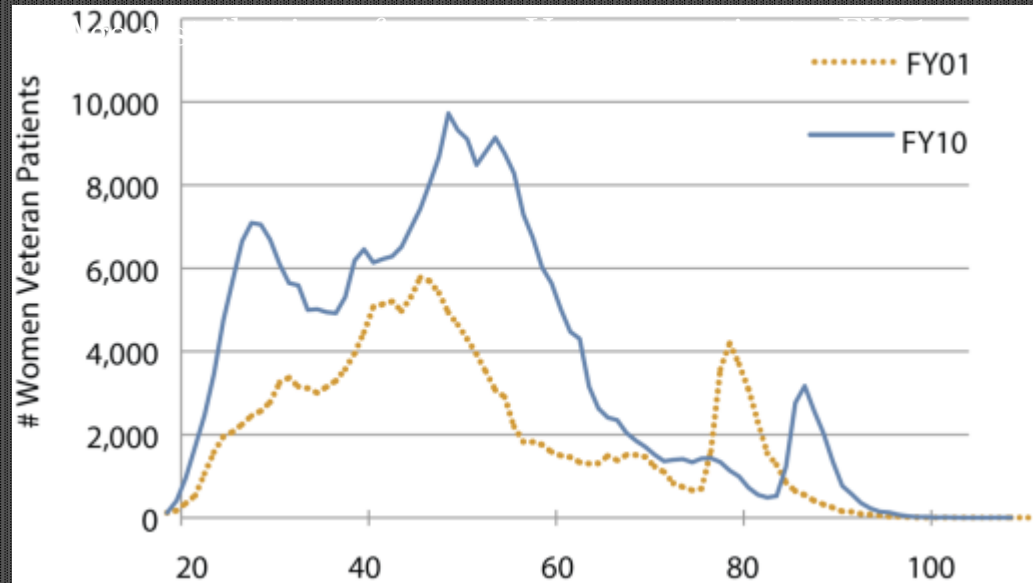
- ☑ Maternity Care
- ☑ Mental Health
- ☑ Service-Connected Disabilities
- ☑ Privacy, safety, convenience

AGING POPULATION

58% of women VA users are 45+

- ✓ Menopausal Needs
- ✓ Geriatric Care
- ✓ Inpatient/Extended Stays

Next 20 years ... more intensive health care services and support as caregivers



Source: Women's Health Evaluation Initiative and VHA Fee. 2012 (in press). Women's Health Services. *Sourcebook: Women Veterans in the Veterans Health Administration. Volume 2. Sociodemographics and Use of VHA and Non-VA Care*

CHARLES GEORGE VA MEDICAL CENTER

- 1995 – 750 females receiving care
- 2012 – 1800 females receiving care
- Average Age – 50-54
- Top 3 diagnoses:
 - Post menopausal symptoms
 - Hypertension
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
 - Military Sexual Trauma



WOMEN VETERANS AND HOMELESSNESS

- Women Veterans: ~8% of homeless Veteran population; 2X more likely to be homeless than non-Veteran women*
- FY 2011: VA served ~198,908 homeless, at-risk, or formerly homeless Veterans (7.7% or 15,303 women)
- VA homeless programs include:
 - HUD-VASH Program** (permanent housing): 13% of recipients are women; 14% of HUD-VASH vouchers go to homeless Veterans with children; among women housed in HUD-VASH in FY12, 38.4% are housed with children

RETENTION OF ENROLLED OEF/OIF/OND VETERANS

- 1 year after separating from service, 62% of female OEF/OIF/OND Veterans and 56% of male Veterans remain in VA care
- 5 years after separating from service, 52% of female OEF/OIF/OND Veterans and 47% of male Veterans remain in VA care

Source: Leslie, Douglas. Women Veterans Cohort Study (2012 unpublished data).



Are We Ready?



IDEAL: WOMEN VETERANS EXPERIENCE OF VA

- High-quality, equitable care on par with that of men
- Care delivered in a safe and healing environment
- Seamless coordination of services
- Recognition as Veterans



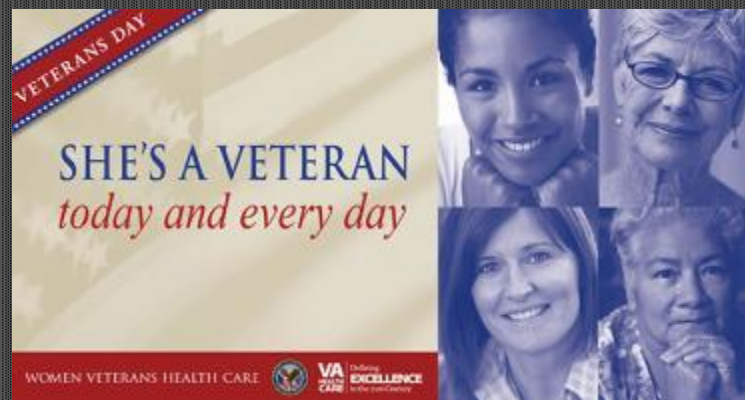
Barriers to Care



WOMEN DON'T IDENTIFY THEMSELVES AS VETERANS

“We don’t know if it’s because they had different roles, because they felt like they didn’t do the same thing as some of our male Veterans ... whatever it is, they are still not self-identifying.”

General Allison Hickey
VA Under Secretary for Benefits
9/27/12



LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF VA SERVICES

- 39% have zero or almost no knowledge of needed information about VA
- Misperceptions in all cohorts about who is eligible for VA care
- OEF/OIF/OND more knowledgeable than other cohorts about available women's health and readjustment services

Source: 2010 National Survey of Women Veterans, (D. Washington)

Overarching Goal: Changing the Culture



MISSION

- **Within VA:** Serve as a trusted resource for the field and work to ensure that women Veterans experience timely, high quality comprehensive care in a sensitive and safe environment at all points of care.
- **Beyond VA:** In line with VA's overarching mission, seek to continually improve personalized, proactive, patient-driven health care for women Veterans and to lead the nation in women's health care.

DELIVERY OF COMPREHENSIVE PRIMARY CARE

- Complete primary care from one designated women's health provider at one site including CBOCs
 - Care for acute and chronic illness
 - Gender-specific primary care
 - Preventive services
 - Mental Health services
 - Coordination of care





Katherine Matthews of Cherokee,
North Carolina, joined the Navy in the late 1970s and trained as an Aviation Machinist's Mate. She died while serving in California in 1985



Make sure **she** gets
the message.



It's **our job** to give **her** the best care anywhere.

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Questions?

